

THE QUIVER

Saturday, December 25, 1869.



"Give up the child, Adela, and come to me."—p. 178.

IN DUTY BOUND.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "MARK WARREN," "DEEPDALE VICARAGE," "A BRAVE LIFE," ETC. ETC.

CHAPTER XXXII.—THE LITTLE LEAK WHICH SINKS THE SHIP.

I MUST say I feel uneasy, Sidney; it was such a sudden illness, and to refuse to see either of us was a bad sign. Besides, she looked the picture of health yesterday."

"I cannot help it, mother. Women are full of caprices," said Sidney, moodily.

"You are going to the Hall now, at all events?" said Lady Peters, anxiously.

"Yes, she may be better this morning."

He did not look quite himself. His face had a careworn expression, different to its usual jaunty air. He had a letter from Amy in his pocket; not that he had opened it.

He knew well enough where the letter came from; and he was affected for the moment by the deep black edge of the envelope, which told him that Amy was an orphan.

Should he throw it into the fire? What was the use of harbouring such a reminder?

"Sidney," said the few blotted lines inside the letter—"Sidney, how was it that you never came? I am ill; you would hardly know me to be the same Amy, and I have no home but with Reuben. He told me you were coming. He chides me, Sidney, because I don't get well, and because I cannot turn my thoughts to other subjects. And my heart leaped with such joy at the hope of seeing you once more—my love! my love!"

"I sat watching all the day. At first, I felt so bright and happy. But I grew weary and heart-sick when night came and you had not been. And the next day I watched. Sidney, I keep watching every day; and my life is wearing out, and my heart is breaking. Come, Sidney, come!—my love! my love!"

This was the letter, which Sidney had not even opened.

He rode over to Bramley Hall betimes. There was a misgiving in his mind which he tried to put down. What was there to be afraid of?—a slight illness, that was all. It would soon pass by, and he cantered merrily onward.

Perhaps she would meet him at the gate, or in the walk, or at the summer-house. What a glorious morning! She would be sure to come.

He left his horse with a groom, and went to look for her in the usual haunts. She was not in any of them. The summer-house was empty and deserted.

He was afraid she was really ill, and that the matter was serious. He hurried to the house to inquire. Yes, she had been ill, but she was better. She was in the breakfast-room as usual.

Oh! it was all right, and he stepped briskly forward. Things would go on just the same. He should have the same pleasant morning, the music, the reading, the lovers' talk. He could do the latter to perfection. What was the matter? Why was she sitting listless and unoccupied, her hands folded, her face rigid? Where was the smile, the glad look, the ardent welcome he had never missed before?

Could this pale-stricken woman be the brilliant Adela of yesterday? He seemed to have met with a blank!

She had debated with herself, all through the weary night, whether she should see him again; whether she should not flee away into some deep

retirement whither his seductive voice could not reach her. But her heart fought desperately for this last interview. Once, and no more!

It was not so easy as he had fancied to deceive a woman!

She explained the matter to him. She thought it was but fair and just. She repeated the words which had made shipwreck of her happiness. The sentences were brief and soon said. But it is the little leak which sinks the ship!

He laughed—not the mocking laugh which still rang in her ears. No; a clear, joyous, musical laugh—his own laugh.

Was that all? Oh! it was so delicious to get up a lovers' quarrel, for the sake of being reconciled. Come, let that pass! Kiss and be friends!

She was indignant at his levity; it nerved her to greater firmness. What before had been a faint glimmer, was now clear as daylight. He was alarmed at her looks. He thought he had gone too far.

"Adela, my love, my dearest, my wife that will be!"

And with all the old blandishments, he sought to take her to his heart, and make his peace.

His syren voice, his honeyed smile, the fascination of his eye, told upon her. Her heart thrilled as only he could make it. Every impulse was drawn as by magic power to him—him only!

He saw his advantage, and he added, eagerly, "Give up the child, Adela, and come to me. What is its puny love to mine—mine, that will cherish and abide by you while life lasts? Think of my love, dearest!" and again he sought to approach her.

But she would not. The ordeal was beyond her strength. She had never loved him more vehemently than now. Her soul went forth to him as to its rest—its home.

But she knew the rest would be deceptive. It had no element of security about it. Pleasure, with white hand, beckoned; Duty sternly forbade.

Was she not in duty bound?

She was not the woman to make a scene. There was little romance or sensationalism in Adela's nature. She was simple-minded, prompt, and firm. And she meant to abide by her sister's child.

She told him so. She had made a mistake, she said, and there was a stifled sigh, and a yearning wistful look in her eyes. But it was not too late. Sorrow had better come now than later. The calm conviction of her mind was that the marriage must be set aside.

Her manner was so decided, that for the moment he could not answer her.

He was conscience-stricken, and his usual fluency seemed to have forsaken him; not that he gave her up. Oh, no! There were many arts yet to be practised. He was a man of resource, and it was not likely he should be baffled after all.

She left the room. She felt it was impossible to

prolong the interview. No matter; let her go for the present. It has been an unfortunate circumstance—an act of imprudence that he wonders at himself for committing. In one more week he would have been safe. His heart is very callous; there is no relenting in it. He had meant to get rid of the child—to cast it off like a stray leaf, that the waters carry to forgetfulness.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

"LUKE! LUKE! MY BROTHER LUKE!"

"Slow but sure wins the day in the end," ruminated Luke Ormond, as he sat on the low sunny wall which divided one part of the garden from the other, and which in fine weather was a favourite lounging-place. "I am glad I screwed up my courage yesterday. Because, now Sir Frederic has said he is satisfied, it is quite time to bestir myself. And I will have the house papered, from the top to the bottom, and a new piano in the drawing-room. It is more than time that old instrument, which Kate has strummed on ever since I can remember, should be chopped up for firewood. A quiet easy life I mean to have of it now—that is, if Juliet won't always be dragging me to parties. Bless her pretty face, I don't care what she does with me!"

"Here, Kate—Kate!"

This was addressed to his sister, who was busy sowing flower-seeds in the beds on the lawn.

"Well?"

"Just come here, Kate, will you?"

"As if I was likely!" replied she, sharply, "when it's as much as ever I shall do——"

"But I have something to tell you, Kate; a piece of news."

"Oh!"

She hesitated a moment, the packet of flower-seeds in her hand. She had a great mind not to go, but female curiosity was strong in Kate. After a little further parley with herself, she stepped across to the wall.

"Won't you sit down, Kate? there's plenty of room."

"No, thank you; I am not so fond of sitting as you are."

"Every one to his taste, my dear; it is not half a bad place here. I can look on so nicely and see you work."

She made an impatient movement as if she would go back, but he stopped her by saying, "Kate, now this tiresome business is over, I am thinking of getting married."

"Is that all? You have thought about it this long time," replied Kate, unbelievably.

"Ah, but I mean to—that is to say, I have——"

"Made Juliet an offer?" suggested Kate, still incredulously.

"Yes, Kate, I have."

"Bravo, Luke!" And she clapped her hands. "But is it really true?"

"Really true."

"And has she accepted you?"

"Yes."

Kate stood and looked at him a few minutes. Her face showed more signs of emotion than it usually exhibited. At length she went up to him, and kissed him affectionately.

"Bless you, my darling! I hope you may be very happy."

"Thank you," replied Luke, stolidly, and settling his collar, which Kate had ruffled in the ardour of her embrace.

"And just look here, Kate. I'm not a man with a flow of words, as you know, but this I say from my heart. The home is yours, dear, as long as you like to stay in it, and the longer the better for me."

"You are very good, Luke."

"That is what I wanted to tell you, and now get back to your flower-beds as soon as you like."

A few soft womanly tears fell from Kate's eyes as she walked away. She was deeply attached to her brother, and the thought of his marriage had affected her greatly. She was almost inclined, for once, to be sentimental; but sentiment had little part in the practical nature of Kate Ormond. Besides, what a wide scope she was about to enjoy; the whole house must be got ready for the bride. There would be papering, and painting, and cleaning to her heart's content. Kate would be in her element.

This excited state of things set in almost directly. Luke's approaching marriage with Juliet Masterman, and the preparations which were being made, became the staple topic of conversation in the neighbourhood.

Luke himself was happily too much engrossed in his courtship, and too often absent, to care for the wild raid that was being made into every part of his home.

The after effect, Kate told him, would be a success; and people, she added, were not married every day—that is, the same people.

But as all things have their end, so had Kate's labours. The house was at length quite ready to receive the bride.

Kate was standing surveying the new paper just hung on the walls of the drawing-room, when in came Peggy.

"If you please, miss, you're wanted."

"Who wants me, Peggy? I'm engaged to every one just now."

"It's him as come before—Mr. Sibley."

Kate turned round in the faint hope that she had not heard right.

"Who is it, Peggy?"

"Him as I let through the kitchen—Sir Frederic's agent, they call him; he wants to see master."

Kate was taking off the white apron she had tied

before her, for purposes of cleanliness, and was rolling it up.

"I told him master was out, and he said he must see you."

"Ah," thought Kate, her heart beating strangely, "there's mischief, I know—mischief. I am coming, Peggy," added she, a moment after.

Mr. Sibley was in the room into which he had been ushered on his last visit. It wore a new face now, it had been re-papered and re-furnished; Mr. Sibley was taking a note of this when Kate entered.

"Dear me," he began with his usual fawning manner, "so we have been making improvements, and buying new furniture! Well I am sure! I congratulate Mr. Ormond on his approaching wedding. I suppose it is to take place immediately?"

Kate was silent. Beyond the barest toleration she could not go, and nothing should force her into a friendly chat with Mr. Sibley.

"If I were your brother, I would get the other business settled first," continued the agent, with a look of malicious triumph.

"What business, sir?"

"He had far better pay the money than be sued for it."

"If you allude to the debt once contracted by my dear father, and repaid by him, that matter is settled. I advise you to ask Sir Frederic."

She spoke bravely, but her heart failed her all the time. She knew how dangerous this man was, and what a weapon he handled.

"My dear young lady, you don't suppose that silly scrap of paper produced by your brother would stand good in law. Where is the receipt, Miss Ormond—the receipt, madam, attested by the name of the late lamented Sir Frederic Morton? Then, indeed, the paper might be valid."

Kate was silent for an instant—baffled. She knew any kind of appeal to Mr. Sibley would be fruitless and humiliating; but she said, quite collectedly, a moment after, "You had better discuss the matter with my brother, I expect him home directly."

"There is no occasion, I only came to warn you."

"Warn us of what?" asked Kate, her heart sickening with a vague alarm.

"That Sir Frederic, who holds the clear, straightforward record of the debt, and can produce a witness, intends to sue for payment, and at once."

"This is your doing, Mr. Sibley," thought Kate—"yours."

But she did not say so. She would not make matters worse by that sharp weapon—a woman's tongue; and she knew if the slightest opening were made, on would rush a torrent, like the letting out of a river.

What a life-long grudge Mr. Sibley owed them! It had its existence before Kate was born. She did not know clearly its origin; but how persistent it was, and how cruel! and what would be the end of it?

When she was alone, she could control herself no longer; she gave a sharp little cry.

"Oh, Luke! Luke! my brother Luke!"

CHAPTER XXXIV.

NO TIME LIKE THE PRESENT.

SHE had scarce time to wipe away her tears when a slow, leisurely step came plodding by the window. Then there stopped and looked in, with a face beaming with happiness, Luke Ormond.

He had stopped the minute he caught sight of Kate.

"Well, Kate, and how does the work go on; will it soon be done?"

"Yes," replied Kate, with unusual meekness.

"I like the paper in the drawing-room very much indeed. I just gave a glance in. The carpet is a first-rate match, isn't it, Kate?"

"Yes," again she replied, in the same subdued tone.

"Kate, you are knocking yourself up. I am so sorry. Sit down, my dear. I want to tell you, Juliet and I think you are so very good to take all this trouble."

"I don't think it a trouble, Luke."

And she stooped down, apparently to pick something from the floor; but in reality to hide her tears.

"I saw that fellow Sibley, in the distance, as I came home," resumed Luke; "thank goodness! he cannot come here any more!"

Kate was silent.

"It was just the right thing to do—to hold my peace until that matter was settled. I never could, and never would, involve the woman that I loved in all the misery of suspense and anxiety. The old man—her grandfather—says that he should not have given his consent," added Luke, who had made a seat for himself on the window-sill, and was evidently drawn out of his taciturnity; "and he was in the right of it."

"I think he was, dear."

"But now all is straight sailing, which just suits me. Pray how long, Kate, does it take a young lady to get her wedding bonnet made?"

Kate gave a forced little laugh. She was very unhappy indeed. She felt that all would go wrong from the beginning to the end—that Luke's bright speculations were delusive as a dream.

How should she tell him? Yet she must do so, and the sooner the better.

"Luke," she began, in a faltering voice—"Luke, dear, I am sorry to interrupt you, but Mr. Sibley has been."

"What! here? to this house?"

And Luke started up in great wrath.

"Yes, Luke; to this house."

"I wish I had caught him about the premises, the

sneaking rascal! I would have given him such a dressing! What did he come for?" asked Luke, breaking off abruptly.

"About that odious debt, dear. You know what I mean."

"But there is an end of that!" cried Luke, eagerly. "Sir Frederic said he was quite satisfied—quite!"

"Luke," said Kate, with anxiety, "did Sir Frederic, when he said he was satisfied, destroy the letter which relates to the debt, or is it still in existence?"

"I don't know about that. He said words to the effect that he would. I should think he has destroyed it."

"Because all turns on that, Luke; and I am afraid how it has been: Mr. Sibley has prevented him. You knew how weak Sir Frederic is; and now the mischief is opened up again, and we are in their power."

Luke's face was the picture of blank dismay. As for Kate, she burst into tears.

"Kate, if you give up, all is lost!" cried Luke, in a tone of alarm. "Dear Kate, don't lose heart of the matter, or what will become of us?"

"I don't give up," said Kate, drying her eyes. "I will think over all possible ways and means. I will leave no stone unturned. But, Luke, I am so sorry—so very sorry—for you!" and she almost broke down again.

"My dear, I am just as sorry for you," replied Luke, simply; "it will fall on both of us alike."

"I can't think that it will fall," cried Kate, recovering her ancient energy. "I know what step I will take first. I will appeal to Sir Frederic myself."

"You, Kate!—you?"

"Yes; why not? I am not in the least afraid of him; and I know my cause is just. I am convinced the debt is paid. Did not my dear father say so on his death-bed?"

"But in strict law, my dear——"

"Never mind about strict law. Sir Frederic would never have thought of such a thing if he had not been driven by Mr. Sibley. It is Mr. Sibley who is bent on our destruction. I shall tell Sir Frederic so."

"Kate," said Luke, regarding her with admiration, "you might do worse. I am quite of opinion that if any one could influence Sir Frederic, you could. You are a very clever little woman, my sister."

He was quite cheerful again for the moment. A few seconds ago he was thinking of breaking off with Juliet, and rushing away to Australia! There had been no bounds to his disappointment and despair.

But he had a vast reliance on Kate's tactics.

"When shall you go?" he asked, with anxiety.

"Directly. There is no time like the present, and Mr. Sibley is gone home. I watched the direction he took. He will not be at the Hall for the next few hours."

"Come, then! off with you!" said Luke, in his usual manner.

Another time she would have given one of her sharp little retorts. She would have said, "Of course, I must do everything. Everything depends on me!"

But her mood was subdued, and almost gentle. Trouble had softened her. She went away without a word.

(To be continued.)

THE CHRISTIAN ON EXCURSION.

BY THE REV. J. B. OWEN, M.A.

PART II.—HIS PRIVILEGES.

SOME fell by the wayside." Perhaps the birds of the air did not devour it all; they seldom do. Some of it escapes. There is generally a remnant of the good seed left in some breast not so hard-trodden and wayworn as others. The seed that "fell"—a term implying carelessness, as if it had been dropped thoughtlessly, and with no settled purpose—must be distinguished from the same seed carefully scattered. "There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth," whether sown at home or abroad. "The sower went forth to sow his seed," and we may sow when we go forth, and often realise the suggestive image, that "he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together." I have known instances of the "bread thus cast upon the waters having been seen after many days."

In our last paper we discussed the *perils* of travel: we close the topic in this paper by suggesting, secondly, some of its privileges, benefits, and opportunities for doing good and getting good. Among these we reckon, first, *the means afforded for collecting and diffusing information*. "The rolling stone gathers no moss." There are men always on the roll from place to place, whose intellects and affections are stone-cold, hard, and bare, as they were, from first to last. Other men roll along life like an "avalanche, which has no force except in a downward direction, and picks up nothing but what aggrandises itself." It is simply snow becoming snow. A depraved disposition has no affinity with anything except its own essential depravity. The man is bad at the best, and becomes worse. His wanderings are loose occasions of mischief both to himself and others, just as the avalanche, whose fall destroys a village, buries it

in a grave of snow. The journey of a Christian philanthropist resembles the main course of a river, which bears refreshment and fertility to every region through which it passes, itself receiving fresh supplies from a thousand tributary streams by the way. The maxim, "As iron sharpeneth iron, so a man the face of his friend," is true on a large scale in coming into intellectual friction with nations. Nations are the greater collects of human experience; they afford, not merely a comparison of one or more minds with one or more other minds, but a public consent and sanction of adopted usages which have stood the test of action. A fresh mind coming upon them, free from prescriptive bias, may detect a flaw or suggest an improvement, and thus the stranger recompenses his welcome. Or, on the other hand, he sees in the foreign custom, or contrivance, or work of art, something which promises to be of use at home. The Christian traveller, while his mind is open to the beauties of Nature, and he gratefully appreciates the bounties of Providence, feels most interest in those things which concern the cause of Divine truth and the social and religious welfare of our common humanity. I have noticed occasionally instances of individuals on travel consuming their whole time in reading rapid works of fiction, and returning home with no more idea of the countries through which they had passed, than if the period had been spent in their own houses. Such a profligate waste of time and opportunity is a folly amounting to sin, and converts the journey into a means of personal damage, instead of an interval of healthy recreation to mind and body. It is hard, in these over-driven times, at the end of the wearied day, to do like him in the Middle Ages, who

"Summed the actions of each day
Each night before he slept."

But the diurnal retrospect, whether at home or abroad, is omitted to our cost. "No day without a line," is the old proverb which implies the duty, the policy, and pleasure of making some addition every day to what we possessed before. "Time is money," is the worldling's maxim; with the Christian, time is a fraction of eternity, and what is lost, like all eternal things, is lost for ever. Consequently, he will not willingly lose an hour. His mind, even in recreation, is in wholesome exercise, and as he whirls along the iron highway, or steams across the channel, his meditations, his reading, or conversation, or watching for objects of interest, will be involuntarily engaging his attention, and ministering to pleasurable and profitable emotions. There is an enjoyment in this mode of travelling for which some have no taste abroad, having none for it at home. But the Christian is—at least he should be, and should try to be—the same man abroad and at home.

I do not remember conversing with any man from whom I did not learn something, be it more or less; and I trust, in some such instances, a fellow-traveller may have learned something from me. "Let no man despise thee," said Paul to his young fellow-itinerant; and one way not to be despised ourselves is not to despise others. We may do good or get good from the humblest minds we meet. The common sea-wort, cast up at our feet by the retreating wave as if the sea were sick of it, has hidden virtues. Out of it is extracted iodine, and iodine has ministered a cure to many loathsome and dangerous skin-diseases.

I fancy I alluded to the following occurrence in a paper which appeared some time back, but it is so pertinent to the subject in hand that I must pray to be excused for bringing it forward again, and at more length.

One night in a train I overheard a warm discussion, between an unbeliever and a Christian acquaintance of his, on the authenticity of Holy Scripture. There were only two other passengers in the carriage besides themselves. After pouring much contempt upon miracles as impossible—(of which, however, the impossibility cannot be proved till you can prove God is impossible)—the infidel gentleman attacked the scientific truth of Scripture, as if the Bible were a book to teach science; though if it had been, its science has never changed, and the successive discoveries of other sciences are continually adducing fresh corroborations of the substantial accuracy of the scientific references in Scripture. Presently the Christian disputant quoted Solomon's assertion, "There is nothing new under the sun."

The infidel answered, with a sneer, "Do you believe that? Nothing new? How about the electric telegraph?"

"Simply," said the Christian, "it is a new application of an old element—electricity—which has existed since creation. The Bible has some reference to all things, new or old."

"The Bible refers to all things, do you say? What is there in the Bible about petroleum?"

As the Christian advocate paused, I ventured to throw in, "Petroleum, sir, is rock oil, and is reckoned as an article of commerce in the oldest book in the Bible. When Job was counting up his former possessions, he stated, chap. xxix. 6, 'I washed my steps with butter, and the rock poured me out rivers of oil.' American rocks were not the first to pour out petroleum."

One of the travellers thanked me, and both fell to musing. The word in season was spoken. "A fool was answered according to his folly," that is, foiled at his own weapon. It may have borne fruit afterward.

Secondly. Travel is an eligible occasion, especially for busy men, for profounder meditation. Most of us have had to regret want of time to ponder in our hearts, as Mary did, particular sayings of Jesus, or didactic incidents in his exemplary life, or other special passages of Holy Writ. How often we have just embarked on an interesting and profitable line of thought, when the inexorable demands of daily life have called us off, and compelled us "to put up the sword in its sheath," intending to draw out its two-edged blade again at our earliest leisure. Well, now the leisure has come, fulfil your vow; home, business, correspondence, for a season are left behind you. You have nothing else to do but to *think*, and something or other you will think of, good or evil, to edification or else to corruption. At the entrance of our old English towns there is the frequent notice posted up, "No vagrants admitted." Admit no vagrant thoughts into your minds, or your journey will be no more than a mental going on tramp. "Redeem the time, because the days are evil," whether at home or abroad; that is, if misspent, not posted up. Put yourself to the proof, whether your former postponements were really from want of leisure, or from want of inclination. Test yourself by the relish with which you resume the thread of those deferred trains of godly thought. Like David in his wanderings, "Strengthen yourself in your God;" reflect upon the life-long overflow of love and mercy by which he has hitherto sustained you,—on the wisdom and grace by which he has guided and led you all along, and mark, learn, and inwardly digest some of those grand vital truths of Christianity which elevate and sanctify the soul. The very excitement of travel, heartily entered into, will quicken your power of discrimination and reflection. Fresh scenes and sensations will give you fresh ideas, and clearer views of old points of truth, hitherto obscurely apprehended.

Thus, thirdly, opportunities for spiritual improvement will be found in things without. As the child of a hero viewing the sculptured monument of his illustrious father, delineating the scenes of valour and conquest by which his native land had been saved, strengthened, and glorified, feels a kindling admiration in his heart which prompts the natural cry, "My father did it all!" so, league after league of diversified route, by river-side, or across fertile plains waving their mountain-pass, through vine-clad valley, by the ears of corn as if triumphing in the promise of a year of plenty—as the believer views them he lifts up his heart in filial adoration and praise, crying to his Father, "O Lord, how wonderful are thy works, in wisdom hast thou made them all!" And the child of God knows that, mighty as his power is, still mightier (if the infinite is capable of degrees) is his love.

"'Twas great to speak a world from nought;
'Twas greater to redeem."

Some such thoughts may fairly be uttered aloud, if done seasonably and unobtrusively, in any company, much more if you chance to fall in with a fellow-Christian in a fellow-traveller. Your communion by the way will, under God's blessing, be mutually pleasing, and to the use of edifying. Your conversation, "seasoned with salt," may not be disagreeable, perhaps not unprofitable, to less earnest ones around you. At all events, it will probably impart a tone to the general gossip, which will prevent the introduction of unseemly and indecent topics, which sometimes give pain to ordinarily sensitive minds.

Thus, fourthly, your journey will have an object beyond one of mere relaxation. When the earliest Christians, as recorded in Acts viii., were compelled to leave their homes, "they that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word." They were not all preachers, in the sense of public preaching; nor are you, but there is no sermon more effective than a good example. You may carry with you a small stock of suitable tracts and cheap Bibles, published as they now are in every tongue, and your distributing these will be a means, perhaps a welcome one, of usefulness to many. They would form so many letters of introduction to the houses of the poor, and, if you can speak their language, lead to conversation, and the sowing of the seed by the wayside. If you cannot speak their language, God in his Word will speak for you. You may leave your little present of the Bible, resting on the promise which it contains: "My word shall not return to me void. It shall prosper in the thing whereunto I sent it." In this way performing some of the functions of a missionary, you may justly regard at least a portion of your travelling charges, as a free-will offering to the general cause of Christian missions. You have for a period supported one missionary in your own person.

As a stranger, your access to the upper classes, whether in home or foreign travel, is difficult; but your visits, as a rule, will be welcome to the poor. I never met a repulse. Not far from the hotel at a fashionable English watering-place, a Christian lady, whose delight it was to follow in His blessed footsteps "who went about doing good," entered the cottage of a poor aged woman, whom she found engaged at her household work. At the close of an interesting conversation, the aged cottager remarked, "Madam, I have lived many years at this place, I have seen a great many people coming here to enjoy themselves, but you are the first one that ever entered my door."

"What good will such visits do?" Perhaps little or none, but perhaps a great deal. The fact of your being a stranger is something in

favour of your getting a hearing. When our dear Lord complained, in reference to the little store they laid by him, where they knew him best, that "a prophet is not without honour, save in his own country," he implied a truth which his servants often experience—that their addresses exert less power at home than farther afield. The Gentile mother persists in the prayer, which disciples would have silenced; the centurion's great faith was not found—no, not in Israel. You may expect to be more listened to in strange places than where your voice is more familiar. Be it so; use this singular influence, which none but strangers wield, and so sanctify your visit among those who have not known you. If you find a Sunday-school on the spot, go and exchange a few kindly words of encouragement with your brothers and sisters engaged in that sacred occupation. Ask their leave to play the organ of a fresh voice to the classes. Let them hear a song of Zion pitched in a new key. Give them an original illustration, from your own circle elsewhere, of some precious promise, or some sweet incident bearing on the love of Jesus for the young. It may be so impressed upon their memories that your brief passing visit may be remembered by some of them among the particular mercies of their lives.

In conclusion. It is characteristic of the Christian never to forget God, whether in his going out or his coming in. If you would have your journey an episode to be thankful for, and not for your discredit, "as people being ashamed steal away when they flee in battle," then "quit you like men" wherever you go, "fight the good fight of faith" whatever may tempt you aside from your allegiance, and in the wavering moment, remember "all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do."

When the noble Macgregor fell at the battle of Prestonpans, the clan wavered, and gave the enemy an advantage. The old chief, seeing the effect of this disaster, raised himself on his elbow, while the blood gushed in streams from his wounds, and cried aloud, "I am not dead, my children; I am looking at you to see you do your duty." The words re-

vived the sinking courage of the Highlanders; there was a charm in the fact that they still fought under the eye of their chief. Christians, your Leader's eye is upon you in the contest with sin and danger. It is the eye of One who was "wounded for your transgressions, and bruised for your iniquities." His watchword to you is, "I am he that liveth, and was dead, and, behold, I am alive for evermore." Let none of us ever forget that there are hostile as well as friendly eyes upon us, for "we are a spectacle to the world, to angels, and to men," who would glory in our shame, and to holy angels and godly men, who would mourn over the fine gold becoming dim. "We are compassed about with a great cloud of witnesses," in heaven; and of the earth, earthy, their name is legion, for they are many. Nay, Jeremiah mourned as we may, "All my familiars watched for my halting." "The battle is the Lord's," and as that soldier is a deserter and traitor who, instead of following his own leader, is found fighting on the side of the enemy, so the Christian at his soul's peril forgets that "the weapons of our warfare are not carnal." Above all, remember this when you are passing through an enemy's country: keep the door of thy lips. Turn thy foot from the evil way. Stand firm against ungedly compromise. Display, as far as may be in your power, the amiableness of the tabernacle to which you belong. Bring forth those gentle loving fruits of the Spirit, which, like Joshua and Caleb's grapes, will best contradict other men's ill-report of the covenant-land where they grew. If there were more exhibitions of the clusters of Eschol than of the fires of the valley of Hinnom, men would speak softer of Zion, the city of our God. As far as in you lies, exemplify and proclaim far and near "the faith once delivered to the saints," and then, whether reckoned among them that went forth to the war, or with those that tarried at home, both shall share in the spoils. "To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven,"—a time to go out, and a time to come in; but there is no time when sin ceases to be sin, or God is not God.

THE CASTLE GARDEN.

BY DORA GREENWELL, AUTHOR OF "CARMINA CRUCIS," ETC.

SING beneath the moon,
I sing at burning noon,
A song of war I sing—a song of love;
And all to win her grace,
And all to see her face
Look on me for a moment from above.

The hills, in quiet deep,
Sleep out their charmed sleep;
The woods are silent; yet within my breast
Is trouble, and a sound
Seems rising from the ground,
To tell of tumult, and of vague unrest.



(Drawn by THOMAS GRAY.)

"Blood, steel, and burning flame
Still tracked his steps, and shame
That cowered o'er wasted hearths with maid, wife, sire."—p. 186.

Methinks the very flowers
Have instincts of the hours
When here three hundred warriors, each a knight,
Back from this border-hold
Drove Scotland's lion bold,
With glint of steel and clang of armour bright.

The scarlet lilies burn
Like fiery swords, that turn
Each way at Eden's gate, and flame, and fail;
As if in angel's hand
Each were a vengeful brand,
That flashed into the air, blood-red, death-pale.

The shining marigold,
Whose yellow disc hath told
The hours in light, shows here a tawny stain;
As on a dagger's hilt
A ruddy life-drop spilt
Rusts through long years, a witness stern and plain.

The latest summer rose
Red to its heart-leaf glows,
I know not be its hue of blood, or wine;
The passion-flowers frail
Would hint at some dark tale,
As o'er the mouldering wall they trail and twine.

The voice of harp and song
Hath here been silent long;
Wild echoes of the revel wake not here:
Yet knit within these stones
Are pangs, wherefore atones
No tardy vow, no lingering penance drear.

Here dwelt a chief, to woo
Too proud, too fierce to sue.
He took from all what pleased him. Strife and ire,
Blood, steel, and burning flame
Still tracked his steps, and shame,
That cowered o'er wasted hearths with maid, wife, sire.

For him no prayer was said,
For him no tear was shed,
When his dark spirit passed from earth unshriven;
Too many tears below
His sword had made to flow,
That one should plead betwixt his doom and Heaven.

*Yet here beneath the moon,
Yet here at burning noon,
I sing my constant song—my song of love;
And all to win her grace,
And all to see her face
Look on me for a moment from above.*

ALICE.

"Suffereth long, and is kind," 1 Cor. xiii.

IT was getting dusk, and from the hall the gong was sounding for tea, and down the stairs, in from the garden, through the doors, came the family, shutting out the sunshine behind them. It was rather a noticeable family, two or three dark, strikingly handsome boys, and among the girls one unusually pretty, with a blonde's complexion, very pretty deep blue eyes, and a natty arrangement of her fair hair. This is Lilly, the universal favourite, who, scattering pretty smiles and looks around her, is now settling into her place between two of the brothers.

"Machell, Kenneth, Bernard, Lilly, Totts," calls the mother, running over their names as when they were children. "Where is Alice?" the tone gets querulous here.

"Out in the orchard with Dick; she generally is now," yawned Lilly. She was very tired, her ceaseless do-nothing life was wearying once and again.

"Oh, dear! I wish she would not," the mother sighed, fretfully.

"She would not, mother, you *know*, if you said so," Kenneth broke in, hotly.

"One can't be saying things always," returned his mother, "one would never have done. I wish he were well gone, not to come back any more."

"Hush, mother," Kenneth warned her, hastily.

But it was too late, Alice had caught the words. She took no notice, only glanced at her brother, and sat down by little Totts, plunging at once into the common details of spreading biscuit with preserve, always an immense treat to the little one beside her. After this the meal passed quietly till, at its close, the mother quitted the room, then—

"You should not stay out in the orchard with Dick," Lilly told her sister; "it does so vex mamma, and us all."

"And you should not stay out in the garden with Luke," struck in Bernard—an unquestionable liberty in the licence of speech, since Lilly was eighteen and Bernard a schoolboy of twelve.

"That is different," Lilly asserted; "we all like Luke, mamma and he get on capitally. Besides, engaged people always do."

"And Dick and I are engaged, Lilly."

Alice said the words softly, and a little hush fell on such news.

Lilly broke the amazed silence. "Oh, Alice, how could you? Mamma will never allow it. You would have to wait years, and then only Dick after all."

"Only Dick after all!" Alice could not feel angry; the very words were quieting.

"The poorest man we know," so Machell spoke his condemnation of her folly.

"Awfully poor!" the schoolboy criticised, a vision of "no tips" floating before him.

Even Kenneth, her never failing ally, said: "I am sorry for this, Alice. You must feel that, at the best, we are talking of a very far-off future."

Then Alice answered, passionately, "Kenneth, Kenneth, not you! What if it were the end of life, or not at all? If he loves and trusts me, I am happy for ever. Dear Kenneth, I am sure you are glad; you would not say, 'Only Dick after all!'"

"No, darling," Kenneth said. "If I were sorry, I was sorry for you. Compared with little Lilly's prospect of a happy, speedy, prosperous marriage, yours seemed but a dark look-out. But happiness is but a relative term after all, and if you can be happy so, I do not know that you are to be less envied than Lilly. No, dear, I like Dick well; I will not say, 'Only Dick after all!'"

And Alice ran away across the hall, and up the flights of stairs to her room. There the lengthening shadows were stealing along the ceiling and falling softly on the floor. It was very restful to Alice. She sat down on the floor, among the shadows, and looked vaguely out on the garden. There were some weary little birds hopping away to bed; she saw them take wing and vanish suddenly in among the dark old trees, and she knew they had returned to the dear little mother bird, and were at rest; and Alice envied the birds. She, too, longed to go and lay her head against the mother, only once there she would have spoken of Dick, and there was no Dick troubling the little tired birds. But the beautiful still calm did away with the jar which had fallen on Alice's happiness. She hardly even remembered what had been the jar. She would sum it all up: Dick had said he loved her. Ah! Alice must pause here. Why her—why Alice? Oh, Dick, Dick! Then, they did not like it—the brothers, and the pretty, stylish little sister, who was herself so very happy, and mamma—it was the old case of the ugly duckling being very much loved after all. Mamma, even if she allowed the engagement, would be glad Dick was so poor that she might not lose her. Ah! the jar was coming back. That was hard—very hard for people to be glad Dick was poor, when Alice knew—who better?—how many things he had to go without, how rough and uncomfortable his whole life was. If Alice could only earn, make, save money for him! She would.

Quick transition from pain to pleasure! Alice felt a regular glow of happiness at her heart. She began to plan it all out—all she would do, and how. She sat and mused so for an hour, and then, as was her custom in the twilight, got down the large clasped book, that had once belonged to a little dead sister. It was impossible to touch it without thinking of a grave, where the grass grew

greener, and the flowers more fair, so carefully was it tended. To-night the little grave was very present to her. It seemed almost as if it had entered into Alice's room, and that she could see the daisies, and violets, and the little rose-trees wave in the wind.

Where she opened the book it taught her a lesson. There had been just a little hardness in Alice's heart against all who had heard and spoken of her happiness so coldly. She had quite intended when she went down to "stand up for Dick," and give back retort for retort; but now she paused. On the page where she opened there were some dried grasses and rose leaves, that had lain on the little sister's heart, and the words that they covered were no new ones either to Alice or the dead child. Through her tears she read them now: "Charity suffereth long, and is kind." "'Long,' paraphrased Alice, 'suffereth long, and is kind.' Yet, oh, Dick, Dick, who will stand up for you if I don't? Oh, Dick, for such long years if they will not love you, can I still be kind?"

Of one thing Alice felt sure. If she could, such a thing would never have been done before. In the first place, it was not every one that knew Dick, and in all such cases it must be comparatively easy, indeed, in every other case under the sun, for no one else could be situated just as she was, no one else could be loved by Dick. Alice very much hoped she should be kind. She said the familiar words over and over as she went slowly down the long stairs; and, as is generally the case, there was a call on her resolutions at once.

The old discussion recommenced with her entrance, and the mother's opposition made the whole scene very painful. At length Alice went up to her mother, and asked if it all meant that she would not sanction the engagement.

Poor little Alice! I do not know what she could have meant by such a question. If her mother had decided so dozens of times over, she would never in her heart have given up Dick, but through a long life would have held herself only engaged to him. Fortunately the mother did not so decide.

"How wearisome it is," she said. "No, I will take no such responsibility. I hold you are all quite old enough now to judge and decide for yourselves. In Alice's case it is of slight importance, for Dick's poverty will probably always prevent a marriage."

And then there was silence, for they all waited for Alice's words, and Alice kept peace.

"Suffereth long." Alice thought she was suffering long now, and half expected some triumphal reward. Foolish Alice! not to know that patience must often stretch over many a year: she herself would have to suffer longer.

(To be concluded in our next.)

THE HYMNS OF ENGLAND.—II.

GENERAL HYMNS.

EIGH HUNT has endeavoured to answer the question, What is poetry? and Wordsworth has given a reply to the question, What is a poet? but where shall we look for an answer to the question, What is a hymn? The authority of Augustine is always quoted in the matter. "A hymn," says he, "must be *praise*—the praise of God—and this in the form of song." But to accept this as an absolute definition, would necessitate the rejection of almost every hymn-book in use. We find hymns addressed to the soul, hymns giving expositions of doctrines, hymns of mere sentiment, hymns of personal experience, and hymns of quiet meditation upon the attributes of God. In all of these the goodness or wisdom of God may be praised in a general way, but they do not contain a specific address to God. How often, on the most solemn occasions, has that hymn of Pope's—

"Vital spark of heavenly flame"—

been sung as an act of worship, and yet it is but an address to the soul, and its appeal is only to the grave and to death. It is an exquisite poem; but a hymn, according to the ordinary definition, is not a poem, but a song. Poems may express to men beautiful thoughts about God: a hymn should express—in the simplest form of speech and the plainest language, if intended for public worship—men's thoughts to God; for worship is not so much an exercise of the head as the heart, and in praising God, people "cannot think and sing; they can only feel and sing."

There are some who hold that songs of praise should alone be sung in our places of worship—that it is inconsistent to sing prayers to God; but this we hold to be an error. Our Saviour honoured the custom of singing, consecrating for evermore the use of vocal music in the church; and the Hallel, or great song of praise, consisting of Psalms cxv. to cxviii., which was the hymn chanted at the Feast of the Passover, sanctions the mingling of prayers with praises in song. It will be generally conceded, however, that praise should form the principal part of the service of song in the sanctuary. An experimental hymn, beautiful as it may be, and exactly suiting the spiritual necessities of some, cannot be the expression of the need of a whole congregation, with its varied wants and circumstances. A doctrinal hymn may not always claim the sympathy of a public assembly, but a general hymn of praise or prayer can be the true utterance of all. Nevertheless, there are many who

think that every hymn should have a specific idea in it. "My object in preaching," said a well-known minister, "is to leave one thought in the minds of the people from each service. To this end every part of the service should be in harmony."

Dr. Watts held a similar notion, and a large number of his hymns were written especially to go with certain sermons. It would often happen that the effect produced upon the congregation by this powerful enforcement of a powerful discourse would be electrical. Some, in wonderment, would listen to the delivery of the hymn, and others would join in the singing while tears glistened in their eyes.

Dr. Doddridge followed the same plan, and some of his most favourite hymns are those which were first sung at the conclusion of his sermons, in which the principal features of the discourse were embodied.

If we want a specimen of the extreme style in specific hymn-writing, we have only to turn to a volume of George Wither's, and there we find hymns for every event—public or private—touching mind, body, or estate. Among them may be mentioned "A Hymn for a Housewarming," "For a Widower or Widow delivered from a Troublesome Yokefellow," "A Hymn whilst we are Washing," &c. &c.

Good in many respects, and in its proper place, as this method of definiteness is, we think the plan usually adopted by those who have the conduct of public worship, to select, at all events for the earlier part of the service, a general hymn of praise, is better, and to specimens of these we shall refer.

How joyous is Mendelssohn's open-air music, and how joyous are many of the open-air songs of the singers of the Church! It is very sweet to hear them praising God on the waters, or in the fields and groves; pleasant to hear them joining in the great chorus of creation, forgetting for a time creeds and doctrines, and texts and sermons, and just singing their soul's joy to the Creator in the midst of his works. Henry Vaughan, the Welshman, who loved to wander among his native hills, and ponder over the sweet and tender thoughts of George Herbert, for whose writings he had an enthusiastic admiration, gives us an idea of the place for this open-air communion in the lines—

"Fresh fields and woods, the earth's fair face,
God's footstool and man's dwelling-place.
I ask not why the first believer
Did love to be a country liver—
Who, to secure pious content,
Did pitch by groves and wells his tent,

Where he might view the boundless sky,
And all those glorious lights on high,
With flying meteors, mists, and showers,
Subjected hills, trees, meads, and flowers,
And every minute bless the King,
And woe Creator of each thing.

If Eden be on earth at all,
'Tis that which we the country call."

George Wither has left us a curious, and literally a "musical" hymn, on the *manner* in which the song of praise should be sung. It commences—

"Come, O come! in pious lays
Sound we God Almighty's praise—
Hither bring in one consent
Heart and voice and instrument."

The instruments he selects are the trumpet, the cornet, the viol, and the lute; the choir is arranged thus—Humanity is to be the master of the song, the birds are to sing the warbling treble—

"Angels and supernal powers
Be the noblest tenor yours.
From earth's vast and hollow womb
Music's deepest bass may come.
Seas and floods from shore to shore
Shall their counter-tenors roar."

This music of praise, so quaintly described by Vaughan, is very real. The writer remembers one summer evening, strolling on the slopes of Snowdon. It was a still Sabbath night, the sun was just sinking, and everything that had voice was singing its evensong. Birds trilled their merry lays, insects made an organ accompaniment, and, from a little conventicle down in the valley there rose the strains of psalmody. No sermon upon the goodness of God, no appeal from the pulpit, could have made a greater impression on the mind than did this hour of communion with God in Nature. It was rest for the soul—it was heaven in germ. All the scene was full of thought, which words about it would only have obscured. Hours like these have often been seized with advantage by our hymn-writers, and some of their best effusions have sprung from such scenes. It was so with Cowper. When he was recovering from that awful darkness which eclipsed his soul, he was advised to leave St. Albans, where he had been staying under the care of a physician, and visit Huntingdon. When he arrived there, feeling himself a stranger among strangers, and dreading a return of his fearful malady, he wandered away, strolling quietly through lanes and fields; alone, yet not alone, for God was with him. The scene was so peaceful and calm that its spirit entered into his own soul. Coming to a grassy knoll beneath a leafy canopy, he knelt down and poured out his heart in prayer and praise. It was an hour of deep and holy joy. Confidence in God came back to him again, and his soul had found

a quiet resting-place. It was the day of the preparation for the Sabbath, and on the following morning he went to church for the first time since his period of insanity. Then again there came to him a time of refreshing from the presence of the Lord, and in a somewhat curious way.

A worshipper, whose whole soul seemed thrown into the praise of God in the psalm which was being sung, attracted his attention. He says: "I looked at him, and could not help saying in my heart, with much emotion, 'The Lord bless you for praising Him whom my soul loveth.'"

When the service was over he went back to the quiet spot where he had found joy on the previous day, and there he felt again that glorious Presence which giveth life. "I could say, indeed, with Jacob," he says, "not how dreadful, but how lovely is this place! it is none other than the house of God." And that spot was the birth-place of the hymn—

"Far from the world, O Lord, I flee,
From strife and tumult far,
From scenes where Satan wages still
His most successful war.

"The calm retreat, the silent shade,
With prayer and praise agree;
And seem by Thy sweet bounty made
For those who follow Thee.

"There, if Thy Spirit touch the soul,
And grace her mean abode,
Oh, with what peace and joy and love
She communes with her God!

"There, like a nightingale she pours
Her solitary lays,
Nor asks a witness of her song,
Nor thirsts for human praise."

The scene of the hymn is given in the second verse.

Dr. Watts was a great admirer of Nature, and is often very felicitous in his descriptions. He did not pretend to the dignity of a poet, in fact, he disclaimed the title. "I make no pretensions to the name of a poet or a polite writer, in an age wherein so many superior souls shine in their works through the nation." Nevertheless, in some of his writings he showed a keen sympathy with the moods of Nature, and has left us some exquisite hymns of praise, as—

"Eternal Wisdom, Thee we praise,
Thee the creation sings,
With Thy loved name, rocks, hills, and seas,
And heaven's high palace rings."

Well-known and well-loved hymns of a similar character are those beginning—

"Rejoice, ye righteous, in the Lord;"
"High in the heavens, eternal God;"

and

"I sing the almighty power of God,"

which has long been a favourite with the young.

The object of Dr. Watts's hymns, we are told in his preface, is to give expression to every aspect

of Christian experience; but we are glad to find that he sometimes leaves the doctrinal and experimental, and turns to the outer world, to find reflections of the inner life, interweaving the mysteries of Nature with those of Revelation. That he possessed the happy art of reading the lessons from both books, and turning them to good account, may be gathered from the use he made of a scene with which he was familiar.

One day when he was at Southampton he sat by the open window of the parlour looking across the water; there lay the pleasant fields and woods of the New Forest, and close beneath him flowed the river Itchen. The scene is one of the pleasantest in Hampshire, and was worthy to remind him of the heavenly land. He has immortalised it in the hymn, "There is a land of pure delight," and has given a very happy description of it in the verse—

"Sweet fields beyond the swelling flood
Stand dressed in living green;
So to the Jews old Canaan stood,
While Jordan rolled between."

Charles Wesley has interpreted a scene at the Land's End in a similar way. The extreme projection of the Land's End stands 200 feet above the boiling, seething waters of the Bristol Channel and the Atlantic. It was on this promontory that the hymn was written—

"Lo! on a narrow neck of land,
Twixt two unbounded seas I stand."

We often get in Charles Wesley's hymns a snatch of glad some song, even in the midst of descriptions of conflicts and difficulties in the spiritual life. In a hymn, for instance, on the mercy of God, we get the verse—

"Its streams the whole creation reach,
So plenteous is the store;
Enough for all, enough for each,
Enough for evermore."

Haste is apparent in so many of his writings, that we can imagine him jotting them down, a verse here and a verse there, as they flashed into his mind.

We are told that "it was on his preaching tours, by the roadside, amidst hostile mobs or devout congregations, and, in his old age, in quiet journeyings from friend to friend, that he poured forth the great mass of the Wesleyan hymns. When his life of beneficence and courageous conflict was almost over, it must have been a sight to call forth tears as well as smiles to see the old gentleman (dressed in winter costume even in the height of summer) dismount from his old grey pony, and leaving it in the little garden before his friend's house in the City Road, enter the parlour, sword in hand, and note down the words of some sacred song which had been chiming through his heart."

Addison has written one or two exquisite general hymns of praise to God in his providence and works. They appeared in the *Spectator*, which on Saturdays was devoted to grave and religious subjects. An article (No. 465) on "The Right Means to Strengthen Faith" is closed with that grand hymn—

"The spacious firmament on high."

Another, beginning—

"How are thy servants blest, O Lord!"

is appended to a dissertation upon the sea, and is entitled "The Traveller's Hymn." It was probably written at the conclusion of his travels in 1700. These verses are very fine:—

"When by the dreadful tempest borne
High on the broken wave,
They know Thou art not slow to hear,
Nor impotent to save."

"The storm is laid, the winds retire
Obedient to Thy will;
The sea that roars at Thy command,
At Thy command is still."

Our space will not allow us to give many more specimens of the hymns of creation, but we cannot close without introducing the writings of one of our living authors, whose hymns, we think, are destined to be favourites with the people so long as singing shall form part of the worship of God in the sanctuary.

About twenty miles from London, on the South-Western Railway, is the town of Staines, and half-an-hour's walk along the Causeway will bring you to the village of Egham, in Surrey. It has one long, straggling street, but the surroundings are very beautiful. The river—

"Though deep, yet clear; though gentle, yet not dull;
Strong without rage; without o'erflowing, full"—

flows grandly along past the meads, backed by Cooper's Hill, of which Denham says, in his poem named after the place,

"If I can be to thee
A poet, thou Parnassus art to me."

Not far off is the pleasant village of Englefield Green, and a little beyond that is the spot which is such a gem of beauty, Virginia Water, standing in the midst of Windsor Forest. Amid such scenes as these lives and works the Rev. J. S. B. Monsell, whose charming hymns are full of fresh and fragrant thought, and breathe the very spirit of love and holy joy. Many a time has the writer sat in that church at Egham, and listened to the words of life from his lips. Standing there in the pulpit, with a small Bible in his hand, unencumbered with notes or sermon-book, the preacher has held his audience spell-bound, while in plain, simple language, yet full of tender, poetic thought,

he has told them the sweet story of eternal love. One of his own hymns (written for Tuesday in Whitsun-week) will give the burden of his preaching—

"God is all about us, guiding
Day by day His perfect plan,
And insensibly providing
For the thousand wants of man.

"Stay the dews or check the showers,
Let the sunshine cease to fall;
Wither hopes, and hearts, and flowers,
Buds and blossoms, wither all—

"God is over, God is under,
God is all around our way;
Deeds of mercy, deeds of wonder,
Wait upon us day by day.

"Thus not only in the shadow
Of His house when we have knelt,
But in wood and sunny meadow,
Hill or dale, He's found and felt.

"Wheresoe'er our footsteps wander,
Grace and Nature teach His love;
Guide us here, and lift us yonder,
Where He dwells in light above."

THE QUEEN OF THE ROSES.

A FAIRY PARABLE.

PART II.

AND now I will go back to my kingdom," said the Fairy; so she picked up the leaves of the withered rose and laid them in the dead man's hand, and flew away to see the changes in her country since she left it twenty years before. "For," she argued within herself, "time changes all things, and twenty years is a great deal, even in a fairy's lifetime."

When the Queen arrived at her own country, she found that the Elf had tyrannised over all her happy people, and had grown fat, lazy, and luxurious. She flew to her rose-tree, expecting to see it larger than ever; but, to her grief and dismay, she found it had been choked with weeds, and the few branches that were left had grown spindly and poor, and the blossoms on it looked more like wild roses than cultivated flowers.

The fairies had abandoned their homes in the flowers, and they were left a prey to caterpillars and all sorts of insects. The Fairy flew about the garden, and everywhere she saw desolation and disorder. Every one of the lilies, violets, and sweet-scented flowers had been killed by the weeds, in which lived all sorts of wicked little people, who darted their poisonous stings at the Queen, and would have destroyed her, had she not been both quick and brave. The discontented fairies who had listened to the flattery of the Elf, and had believed in his promises, had been killed by him; and those that he spared he made work and wait on the elves, instead of being waited on and worked for, as they were before they grew discontented and abandoned their sovereign. When they saw their queen, they would have been glad to help her to the throne again, but there were too many against them.

Had the Rose-queen desired to regain her kingdom, she could have done so by calling on the birds and the bees, who were always her friends, to help her; but she did not care to inhabit a place which had once been so beautiful, but was now so dreary.

The Fairy flew to the place where the Elf held his court, and found him surrounded by courtiers as fat, lazy, and bloated as himself.

The Elf was very much surprised to see the Queen, whom he had thought dead years ago, and asked her where she sprang from.

"I come from the abode of human beings," said the Fairy; and then she told him all that had happened to her from the time of her going away, adding, when she had finished, "If I had not been taken by the lady, you would not have been allowed to reign, and my rebellious subjects would never have had their eyes opened to see their discontent. So, you see," she said, turning to the few fairies near her, "out of evil comes good."

"Ah! ah!" hissed the Elf, "you can't restore that;" and as he spoke he pointed to the house that stood in the midst of the garden, and had once been in good repair, but was now decayed and tumble-down, with the windows (that the fairy had last seen with curtains before them) all broken, and part of the roof fallen in, and like the garden, desolate of everything good and beautiful.

"Ah!" sighed the Fairy, as she thought of the happy and beautiful girl who once lived there, "this is indeed worse than all."

"You said she died," hissed the Elf, breaking in on the Fairy's sad thoughts. "I know she died. I saw her coffin carried out under those trees, and I was glad, for I hated her; she never let a weed grow, and killed thousands of my followers. She was always cutting, and tying up, and gardening, till everything was in a state of order that was perfectly unbearable. She had the caterpillars, earwigs, and other insects caught and killed, because they ate the flowers, till they dare not touch a leaf; even the frogs and toads had to keep under the stones in the shrubbery when she was near. She did not set traps for the birds, though they ate the fruit, nor kill the butterflies and bees, no, nor the flies, excepting the bluebottles, the only flies that I care for; so I was glad when she died, for I knew the old people would not stay here

after their darling had gone, and the place is a deal too dull and quiet for any one else to take it. Besides, it fell into decay in a few years, and now the house is overrun with rats and mice, so no one is likely to live here again, and you will not restore peace and order, however you may try. Besides, the kingdom is mine, and I can drive you out, for I am all-powerful, and those who disobey me are put to death." And the little Fairy hearing this, put her hands before her face and wept at so much wickedness, and spreading her wings she flew away out into the wide world, not knowing where to go to find friends or a home.

When the Fairy flew away, she did not know which way to turn, and as all ways were the same to her, she flew straight on, and flying for miles and miles, she came one evening to a garden where the sun was streaming on the flowers, and glittering on the windows of the house that stood in the midst of the garden. It all looked so bright and peaceful that she was fain to go in and rest. So she flew to a beautiful rose-tree that grew on the lawn, and as she nestled in its leaves she almost fancied she was in her own kingdom, in the old happy days before she became acquainted with so much trouble. The birds sang, and the flowers smelt so sweetly, that overcome with fatigue the Fairy slept. She was awakened by a familiar sound. Buzz, buzz, hum, hum, was the noise the Fairy heard, while something fluttered round and round the rose, and finally dived into the very centre of the flower where the Fairy lay. The Queen instantly recognised in the intruder one of her old friends the bees. The Bee was delighted to see her, and carried her off instantly to the hive to visit his Queen. The old Queen was dead long ago; but the bees were always friends with the fairies, and the little Queen had only to tell them of her misfortunes to make them all sympathise with her, and endeavour to help her as much as lay in their power.

"I have heard my great-grandmother often speak of you," said the queen Bee, "and I shall be most happy to help you as far as I can. My great-grandmother often told me what a beautiful kingdom yours was; but when you were so suddenly taken, and the Elf became king, we had to fly; for the Elf killed all the best flowers, and we should have starved had we stopped."

"And have you been here ever since?" asked the Fairy.

"Yes," replied the Bee; "and we are very happy. The Queen is very good, and I should advise you to stop here. It is no use your caring for such a lot of ungrateful people as your subjects have proved; so stay with us. Take up your abode in the rose-tree. The lily is queen of the flowers here; but I am sure she will welcome you, and try to make you happy."

The Lily did welcome the Rose; but the Fairy

though she lived in that garden many happy years, pined for her own country and her own people, and one day she begged the Lily-queen to accompany her to her kingdom once more.

The Queen consented, and they arrived with a long train of fairies and bees at the garden. Another change had taken place. The house had been repaired and was inhabited again. Men were at work on the grounds, restoring them to their original beauty. The queens, returned, collected an army together, and marched to the garden. They killed the Elf, drove out the toads, lizards, earwigs, spiders, slugs, and caterpillars (the mortals unknowingly aiding them), and restored the kingdom to order and peace. Little children pulled up the weeds and planted fresh flowers, the house and garden echoed once more to their pattering footsteps and merry voices. Then the Fairy left her home among the lilies and went to dwell in her kingdom, and to rule and watch over the happiness of her subjects.

L. F.

"THE QUIVER" BIBLE CLASS.

96. An Ephesian Christian who accompanied St. Paul to Jerusalem?

97. There are tinkering gipsies mentioned in Scripture.

98. Who was David's companion at the early part of his reign?

99. A king who had eighty-eight children.

100. There were 10,000 people cast down from a precipice and killed.

101. Where is there given a table of Jewish weights and measures?

102. The tree of life mentioned in the Revelation is also spoken of by one of the prophets.

103. Give an instance of the consecration of a piece of ground.

104. A man who wept when those who had injured him asked his forgiveness.

TO OUR READERS.

We have received a letter from a Correspondent in reference to our Bible Class, and as what is mentioned in it may prove suggestive to some of our readers, we print the following extract:-

"I am so pleased with your Bible Class that I, being a teacher of a large class of senior scholars, have adopted the plan to get the youths to search for the answers to your questions. I have promised a prize book to the youth who gives the first one hundred correct answers to the questions, having in this a twofold object, first to make them search the Scriptures, and next to read *THE QUIVER*."

In compliance with a further suggestion made in this letter, we propose in future to allow two weeks to pass before giving the answers, thus affording to those who adopt the plan of our Correspondent the opportunity of allowing their class to devote Sunday evening to the study of the questions, the answers to which are to be ready on the following Sunday morning.—Ed.